under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%. Cost of machinery has also been reduced through Fiscal Policy measures.

In order to explore the potential for further increasing the exports of textiles a series of specialised market studies have been commissioned through professional firms. These studies will enable identification of business opportunities for the exporters especially in the post quota regime.

Welfare of weavers

†1604. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various schemes of Government for weavers; and

(b) the steps taken for welfare of weavers?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) The Government of India is implementing the various schemes for welfare of handloom weavers in the country. The details of these schemes are as under:

(I) Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana

The scheme envisages product development, infrastructural support, institutional support, training to the weavers, supply of equipments and marketing support etc. both at macro and micro levels in an integrated and co-ordinated manner for the overall development of the handloom sector and the weavers.

(ii) Mill Gate Price Scheme

Government of India is implementing the Mill Gate Price Scheme under which the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC), is arranging supply of all types of yarn required for the handloom weavers and their organizations at Mill Gate Price. The expenditure for transportation of yarn from the Mill Gate to the godown of the handloom agencies is being reimbursed by Government of India to NHDC.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(iii) Marketing Promotion Programme

Marketing Promotion Programme (MPP) is an integrated Scheme under which assistance is provided for Organisation of National Handloom Expos, Special Handloom Expos, Crafts Melas and setting up of Urban Haats, Marketing Complexes etc.

(iv) Handloom Export Scheme

In order to promote export of handloom products, the Government of India has been implementing a Scheme called Handloom Export Scheme which aims at providing assistance to the eligible handloom agencies for building up, development and marketing export worthy handloom products.

(v) Implementation of Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985

With a view to protect the interests of the handloom weavers in the country, the Government of India is implementing the Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 under which certain textiles articles which are traditionally being produced on handlooms for lower and middle class masses are reserved for exclusive production on handlooms.

(vi) Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme

The Government of India has been implementing the Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme under which Central assistance is provided for the construction of Rural/Urban Worksheds/Workshed-cum-Houses to ensure a better working environment for the weavers.

(vii) Weavers' Welfare Scheme

The Government of India is implementing the following Weavers' Welfare Schemes:

(i) Health Package Scheme

(ii) Thrift Fund Scheme

(iii) New Insurance Scheme.

Under the Health Package Scheme assistance is provided for the treatment of diseases like asthma, tuberculosis and inflammation of respiratory system, cost of eye testing and spectacles, supply of drinking water, maternity benefits to women weavers, payment of additional

compensation for permanent measures of family planning and infrastructure for the primary health care.

Thrift Fund Scheme for Handloom Weavers is implemented for creation of a fund in the nature of a provident fund to enable the weavers to meet expenses towards their children's education, marriage, confinement or religious ceremony in the family.

The New Insurance Scheme provides insurance cover to handloom weavers against various types of risks such as loss of life, limbs, eyes etc., due to accident, damages to the dwelling units and raw materials due to natural calamities such as fire, lightning, flood cyclone etc., reimbursement of expenses of treatment towards injury, disease and illness, eye testing and maternity benefits.

In addition to the above schemes, in pursuance of the announcement made by the then Prime Minister on August 15, 2002, the following new schemes have been introduced during 2003-04 for handloom weavers in the country:

(i) Scheme for reimbursement of one time rebate @ 10% given by the handloom agencies on sale of handloom cloth during the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05;

(ii) Integrated Handloom Training Project (IHTP); and

(iii) Bunkar Bima Yojana.

Scrapping special textile duty

1605. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the EU has conveyed to India of scrapping its discount on import duties on textile exporters of China and India to ensure that block market stays open to some of the world's poorest fabric producing countries;

(b) if so, to what extent this decision has been welcomed by India;

(c) whether global trade in textile and clothing will become fully liberalized from 2005;